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of a true professional man's life. If he does not carry with him the spirit of helpful service, he has no right to call himself a professional man.

So vital is this matter of our professional virtue or honor that at stated periods we should examine ourselves as to our attitude of mind. Are we sincerely desirous of being broadly helpful, or are we just going through the required formulæ? Do we recognize the obligations of service to humanity which are peculiarly ours because of our special training? The professional man ceases to exist as a professional man the moment he comes to regard his work as merely a means to a livelihood. In like measure he must avoid becoming narrow in his vision, and activity. The tendency in all lines is now to specialize, and the temptation to the professional man is to shut himself up in one interest, to one branch of his own profession, leaving outside all interest in other branches and in affairs of the world at large. He places unprofessional limits upon himself.

A professional man should seek opportunities for service outside his own line. He should keep abreast of the times. He should get an international mind and an international vision. He should of course become active in the affairs of his own profession, but he should take part in the broader programs for human betterment.

Above all we must shun selfishness. The test of any man or movement is: What does it contribute to the common good? Every professional man is the servant of all. The modern spirit is asking for a more practical working of the old idealism, and the condition of primacy is the capacity for service.

By all means we must avoid the habit of criticizing others. Remember that we are leaders, and no leader ever succeeded by the use of complaints. Neither has anyone ever yet succeeded in anything by trying to tear someone else down. One of the best mottoes I have ever seen hangs on the wall of a friend's office,—“You cannot expect a dog to perform its best tricks when someone is standing on its tail.”

In short we can do no better than to adopt the adage of William Penn, the first librarian of this country:

I expect to pass through this life but once. If there is any kindness or any good that I can do to my fellow beings, let me do it now. I shall pass this way but once.

There is upon us an obligation because we profess skill in our varied lines. What we have is only a trust. Wealth is under obligation to poverty. Knowledge has a service obligation to ignorance. Strength is under obligation to weakness and before God we are responsible for our use of our abilities.

## THE LIBRARIAN'S DUTY TO HIS PROFESSION

By C. B. RODEN, *Librarian, Chicago Public Library*

### FIFTH GENERAL SESSION

We speak of our calling as a profession, and even as we speak we mentally align ourselves with those ancient and honorable professions that minister to the great and fundamental needs of mankind, the needs of the soul, the body, and, most prized of man's possessions, his rights and liberties.

Religion, Medicine, Law—these three—and when we add a fourth, Education, ministering to the needs of the mind, we do not thereby alter nor diminish the dignity and excellence of that glorious company to the circle of whose fellowship we claim admittance.

Yet we have no body of doctrine running back to a time “whereof the memory of man

runneth not to the contrary.” We have no treasury of accumulated lore derived from the ancient folkways. We have no divine revelation upon which to base our claims to a ministry.

We have only a faith, not yet shared by all of our generation, which I have heard questioned even by one of our own most distinguished colleagues, that we are doing useful work, and on the basis of that belief we profess and call ourselves a profession.

Now, I hold that there is a material distinction between that form of ministry that constitutes the essence of the professions,—which, in the words we have just heard, “have

their contacts with souls, not with things"—and that other form of usefulness, which may be almost, but not quite, equally exalted, called service.

If we were only content to waive our claims to professional honors, and to be known as good and faithful servants, we should be safe in pointing to the services we are already rendering, and to their steadily widening scope, seeking to comprehend every human relationship and activity, from the cradle to the grave, in business, in pleasure, in learning and in leisure.

But if we still persist in our aspiration to be classed among the professions I begin to fear that the very variety and multiplicity of our services is raising up a cloud, already larger than a man's hand, which is threatening to come between us and those ideals of ministry that we must keep ever before us, clear and undimmed, as our professional objective. It is not the objective that is in danger, nor yet those ideals, for they are of the eternal verities. It is only our poor human faculty of envisioning them that is being threatened by this cloud.

This cloud is the swarm of specialists and specialties into which we are breaking ourselves up, disintegrating our former solidarity and tending to dissipate our unity of effort, of objective. Tending, as it were, to render ourselves less and less capable, or at least less prone, to see the woods because of the multitude of trees we are cultivating.

We now have many kinds of librarians: for schools, for colleges, for universities, for doctors, for lawyers, for bankers and business men. All true and zealous servants, each intent upon developing his own specialty and jointly and severally making splendid contributions to the efficiency with which the work of the world is done.

But I submit that helping to do the work of the world is but one, and that the least vital, dynamic element of the professional function. I do not in the least mean to minimize the character or the value of the service we are rendering in thus mobilizing the printed word in aid of research, in industry, in all that helping to do the work of the world involves and implies. Speed the day

when every art and every craft, every artisan and every craftsman shall have progressed so far, under the tutelage of his respective librarian, as to admit and accept the lessons of experience as they are demonstrated and recorded in books. Thus, indeed, will the kinship of nations, of the ages and of men be promoted and cemented.

But let us not forget that there was a time when lawyers scorned to accept a fee and defended the right for the sake of the right, when the offices of priest, physician and teacher were united in one person, and each and all were offered up in ministry as equally to the glory of God!

If we translate this phrase, the glory of God, into terms of modern currency and speak of the service of humanity, and if, moreover, we take into account the complexities of modern life which have forced the professions to stoop a little from those pinnacles of altruism where once they dwelt in ethereal isolation, we shall still find, I think, that they have not altogether abandoned their former positions; that they are still true to the professional vows by which they were dedicated to the service of humanity, which is a Ministry, even while they are engaged in the service of men, which is Service. That margin surrounding the day's work, which must be kept clean and fair in order that the imperishable contributions of each age and generation to the next may be inscribed upon it, is what, it seems to me, characterizes and dignifies the professions. It is this idea of a margin that I have been trying to lay hold of.

Now, though we have no revelation once delivered to the saints, and no majestic foundation of principles upon which to rear our practice; though we have not yet had time even to agree upon a canon of ethics, and the fiftieth birthday of our corporate consciousness is still four years away, yet we have had entrusted to our ministerial offices two of the most respectable and, on the whole, most important manifestations of Divine Grace known in the world since the dawn of history: Books and the Human Race. With two subjects of such magnitude to work upon, there is surely ample room for professional ministrations, if we find that we still have left any

considerable margin over and above the day's work in the service of men, that we may devote to the service of humanity. I think we have such a margin, although it is not a very generous one, nor as generous as it once was, and shows here and there a finger print of the market-place.

To serve humanity means to help it upward from plateau to plateau in that steady but painful climb towards some sort of a consummation, to which it has been predestined by the power or force or impulse that moves on the face of the waters, call it Evolution, or Destiny, or God, or what you will. That is the sort of service that is professional and for which the professional margin must be kept pure and wide.

I think no one will be found to dispute the assertion that libraries have a contribution to make to this momentum that is driving the race forward. Indeed I am not at all sure that the free public library movement is not the very particular contribution that this age has been preordained to make. Preordained? Mr. Henry said, on Wednesday morning, that one must be preordained or one can never be truly ordained to any kind of ministry whatever. The question seems to be whether we are going to be able to keep the fact of our preordination and our ordination steadily before our own eyes, and whether we are not standing in peril of selling our birthright for a mess of highly satisfying and very savory pottage.

It is service to men—highly satisfying service—to teach the celebrated man in the street to earn more dollars, raise more hens, to win more and more of earthly prizes by using library books.

It is service to humanity, our professional margin, to bring Books and the Human Race together to the end that Books may lend the impetus of their inspiration toward hastening that "one far-off Divine Event, toward which the whole creation moves"; to grasp that man in the street by the soul and lift him into contact with other souls, to set him "silent upon a peak in Darien" with Keats, send him with Plato to seek the Unknown God, with Dante into Hell, or with Wordsworth to contemplate the Intimations of Immortality.

The trustees' meeting held in this room last Tuesday afternoon afforded startling evidence of the reaction that follows upon even a partial realization of the mission of librarianship in its contact with souls. Of course, the trustees that were here were of the sort that had caught a glimmer of the vision. The other kind does not come to trustees' meetings.

Their unanimous, spontaneous, almost naive testimony to their realization of the implications and proportions of the task and opportunities confronting their own particular institutions, welling up from the hearts of these men, all unperceived by the assemblage intent upon questions of revenue and administration, rested like a benison upon its deliberations and made this, in spiritual values as contrasted with mere shop talk, one of the most significant meetings of this crowded week.

Business men, lawyers, ministers, as they were, they were thrilled and filled, not by the promise of service to themselves nor to the affairs of the world, but each in turn affirming in tones of wonderment and conviction his belief in the validity of the splendid commission entrusted to the American public library, one and indivisible, as an agency of culture, as an instrument of education not second to the public schools, as an element in the irresistible and preordained current of progress that is lifting the Human Race from age to age, from plane to plane, upward to its destiny.

"Make the library known to all the world, as we have come to know it" was their cry, and to one hearer, at least, it seemed like the first and great commandment to us in our search after our professional duty. And the second is like unto it: That we know the library ourselves, as they have come to know it. "On these two commandments hang all the laws and the prophets." To contrive to keep steady and undimmed before us the high ideals of a service to humanity to which a fair and generous margin of our time and talents is to be dedicated. To set a small taper now and again upon this altar and keep it alight even in such a gusty place as this where the contrary winds and cross currents of many sessions, sections, and round tables

and the whole lowering cloud of specialties, to the strenuous pursuit of which we have given over the week, may yet extinguish its feeble flame unless we guard it faithfully.

Books and the Human Race; Librarianship to Humanity. That is a task of professional proportions, for the promotion of which we must contrive to save, to rescue, perhaps, a

margin of professional ministry. And when we have all been brought to accept this commission, and have succeeded in gaining recognition from the world of men that our fulfillment of it is a vital contribution to its continued upward flight, then we shall have accomplished our full duty to our profession, for then we shall have a profession.

## THE LIBRARIAN'S DUTY TO THE PROFESSION

By MARY EMOGENE HAZELTINE, *Preceptor, Library School, University of Wisconsin, Madison*

### SUMMARY. FIFTH GENERAL SESSION

The indifferent man frames his philosophy of life in the well worn phrase, "the world owes me a living"; the professional worker reverses this and expresses his ideal in the phrase, "I owe the world a living"—that is a living, vital being, a personality. In other words he contributes himself to his work and also includes therein his code of relationship to those about him. These two contributions—personality and adjustment, underlie all professionalism, the details varying from profession to profession according to the peculiar requirements of each. Let us apply these fundamental concepts to the particular demands of the librarian's calling.

In giving himself, the librarian must first of all be prepared to contribute the essentials of character. Character, we are sometimes prone to forget, still includes the Puritan attributes of truth, honesty, frugality, and thrift. This seems trite enough, but do not these homely virtues apply to our work, and react on professional conduct and concept?

In addition to these Puritan qualities which stand the acid test, the librarian should also have the human qualities of a warm and understanding heart. From a warm heart comes the courtesy that puts people at their ease. From an understanding heart grow patience, sympathy, and tact, with its "soft answer that turneth away wrath."

Building on these inherent qualities of character, a profession implies years of careful study and preparation followed by specific training. Knowledge therefore is the indispensable acquired asset in the librarian's personal equipment. Such knowledge should be alive and subject to the law of growth; for true learning is not mere superficial ac-

quaintance with facts, nor a mere perfunctory knowledge derived from past stores, but springs from a continuing education in the fundamentals of human nature and of the realities of life, and increasing attainments in the wisdom of one's subject.

A librarian should be bigger than the day's work and its routine, with a vision of the field as a whole, but while working towards the plans of the future, not forgetting or neglecting the needs of the day.

While the librarian offers his character, his human understanding, his knowledge, and his conduct to his profession, he should at the same time have the Hellenic virtues of temperance and proportion. Professional concentration is an excellent thing, but "If a river swell beyond its banks," as Sir Edward Coke said, "it loseth its own channel," and thither professional zeal can carry one. The librarian should not take his profession so seriously that he fails to become a well-rounded citizen; he should have his share in community activities, living a normal life.

The professional attitude of the librarian rests upon constant adjustment both in relation to his colleagues and to the public he serves. The first of these relationships is the more difficult to meet, because of close and constant association. Its essential virtue is loyalty, loyalty in word and deed. In its positive aspect loyalty requires "standing by" one's colleagues, giving moral support, imputing to each a desire to advance the work, even though his technique may be quite different from one's own.

The farther the librarian advances in the rank of his profession, the more he needs to remember *noblesse oblige*, especially in rela-